

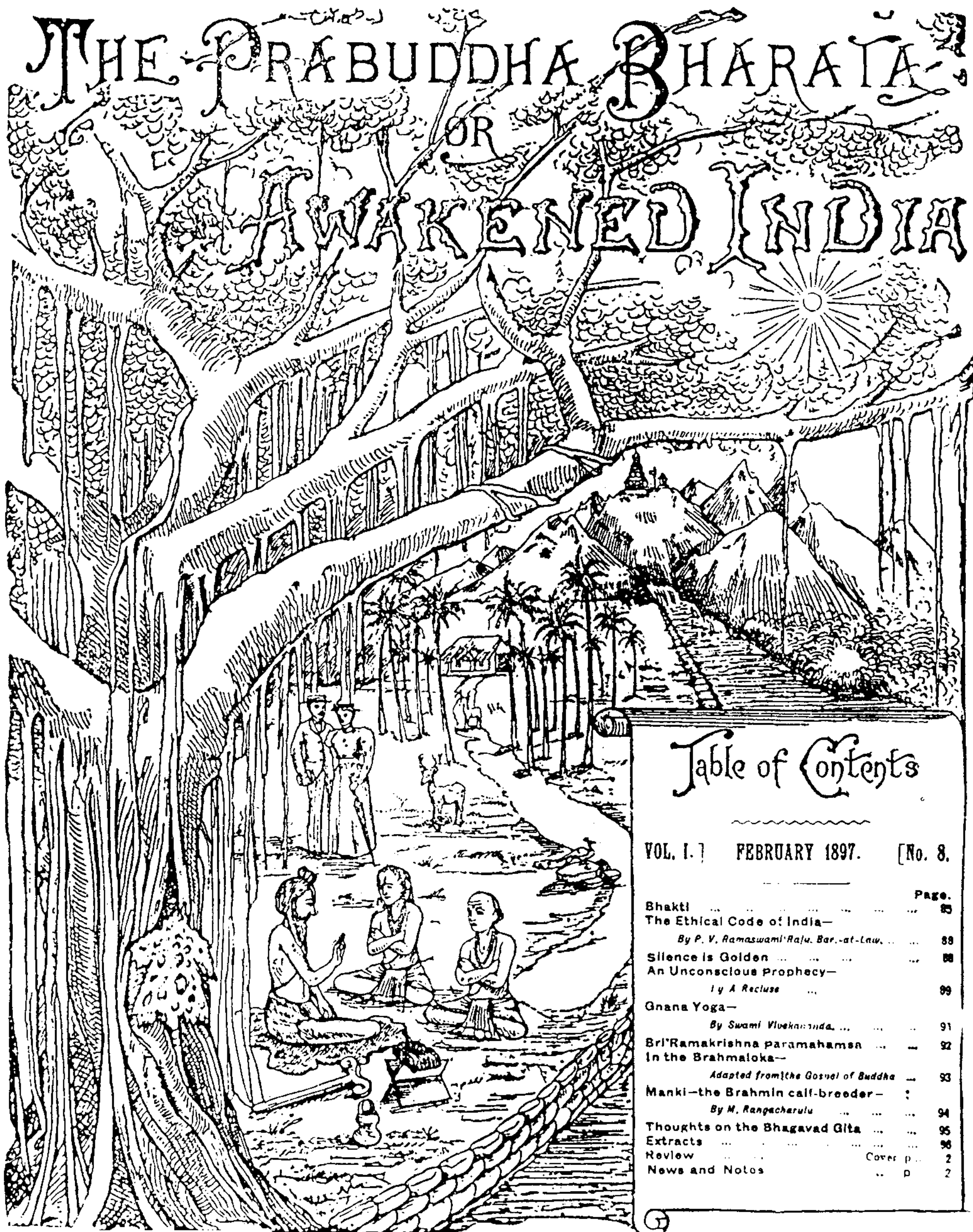


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Review.

Photographs of Temples and Idols of Southern India: by T. G. Appavu Mudaliyar, Photographer. Mr. Mudaliyar deserves to be congratulated on the success with which he has accomplished the most difficult task of taking clear and correct photos of our temples and images. The difficulties incidental to such a task can only be appreciated by those who have been present at such photo-taking scenes. The photographer, wishing to give the aid of the "art that immortalises" to any particular deity, has first to invoke the aid of the mandarins who rule the deity and the social and political gods of the place to which it belongs. This secured, the money has next to be got for the scaffolding and other things required, and in some cases this forms a terrible consideration as when God chooses to seat himself on a mountain. Besides, the deity has to be specially decorated for the 'sitting' and this is a favor not easily obtained. In spite of these and other difficulties of a like nature Mr. Appavu Mudaliyar has achieved some wonders in photographing. For instance, the statue of Buddha at Sravana Balagola which is eighty-six feet high, i. e., a little less than the Light-house at Madras and besides stands on a hill, has been photographed for the first time, by our Mudaliyar. The colossal figure was for a long time a standing challenge to photographers and it is said that it has baffled many an English artist. The block of buildings known by the collective appellation—the temple at Chidambaram—has we believe for the first time deigned to enter as a compact whole into the card of our artist. By the way Mr. Mudaliyar is more than an artist. He is a *bhakta* to boot and takes the photos of our gods with a remarkable religious fervour which mysteriously lends a charm to his photos. His Rājamanārsāmī of Mannārgudi, Arāvamudan of Kumbakonam, Natarāja of Nanjungood, Kallalagar of Ten-Madurai, and the famous Chellaperumāl of Melkote are excellent; and among the female deities Perundevi Tāyār of Conjeeveram, and Minākshi of Madura, and Kanchi Kāmākshi have come out very fairly. He has also taken a photo of Anjaneyasāmī in *yogāsana* at Sholingur, the only *mūrti* of its kind. We have no doubt that Mr. Mudaliyar will receive the patronage of the public which he richly deserves. [Vide cover p. 3.]

We have received three excellent reprints from the *Viveka Chintamani* which we hope to review in our next issue.

News and Notes.

The Adyar Lectures this year were very interesting, those on Hindūism and Christianity being the best of the four. They were very largely attended and eagerly listened to. Mrs. Besant with her charming eloquence is a precious acquisition to our cause and is doing a world of good in our own country and elsewhere. We hope to have soon the pleasure of having the lectures considerably enlarged and printed in a book form.

Dr. Barrows has, as our readers are aware, been delivering a course of lectures at Calcutta and elsewhere. That they have not been well received in the country is the Doctor's own fault. We expected from him a philosophical treatment of the great religion of Christ, which in his hands has unfortunately fared only as well as in the hands of an average missionary in India, who as a matter of course knows but little of the philosophical unity of religions.

Swami Vivekananda will soon be in our midst. The tremendous influence which his teachings have obtained over a large number of sincere and highly cultured men in England and the general impression which they have produced throughout the country may be measured by the following address presented to him on the occasion of his departure from London:—

"The students of the Vedānta Philosophy in London, under your remarkably able instruction, feel that they would be lacking in their duty and privilege if they failed to record their warm and heartfelt appreciation of the noble and unselfish work you have set yourself to do, and of the great help you have been to them in their study of religion.

"We feel the very deepest regret that you are so soon to leave England, but we should not be true students of the very beautiful philosophy you have taught us to regard so highly, if we did not recognize that there are claims upon your work

from our brothers and sisters in India. That you may prosper very greatly in that work is the united prayer of all who have come under the elevating influence of your teaching, and no less of your personal attributes, which, as a living example of *Vedānta*, we recognize as the most helpful encouragement to us, one and all, to become real lovers of God in practice as well as in theory.

"We look forward with great interest and keen anticipation to your speedy return to this country, but at the same time we feel real pleasure that India, which you have taught us to regard in an altogether new light, and we should like to add, to love, is to share with us the generous service which you are giving to the world.

"In conclusion, we would specially beg of you to convey our loving sympathy to the Indian people, and to accept from us our assurance that we regard their cause as ours, realizing, as we do from you, that we are all one in God."

The Swāmi landed at Colombo on the 15th instant at 6 p. m. He was met on board the steamer by Messrs. Maharajah, Sokhanadan, Saminadan and others. At the Jetty a very large crowd assembled to welcome him. The Jetty itself and the approach road from the G. O. H. were literally blocked up by the crowd. On landing, the Swāmi was received by the Hon. Mr. Coomaraswāmi, member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon and Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. Arunachalam, Mr. Tambyah and others. He was driven in a gorgeous carriage and pair through Barne's Street to the newly built house belonging to Mr. Ratnasabapathy, broker of Messrs. Bosanquet and Co., specially engaged for the visitors and which will henceforth bear the name of "Vivekānanda Lodge." The Swāmi's carriage drove on slowly followed by a large number of coaches and thousands of people running after them. The procession stopped at the entrance chosen for his stay where a grand pandal had been put up, and no sooner did the Swāmi and his party alight and enter the *pandal* than an artificial lotus hanging under the rafters of the gate over their heads just burst and roses began to shower upon them from within the petals of the lotus. Thence the Swāmi was taken with native music played sweetly upon different instruments, under an open umbrella and flags to the second gate or entrance gate to the garden along the street covered by white cloth. He was received in the house by Coomaraswāmi and others. A Tamil poet sang an ancient song with the help of a violin and then the following address was presented to the Swāmi amidst loud acclamation:—

"REVERED SIR,

In pursuance of a resolution passed at a public meeting of the Hindus of the city of Colombo, we beg to offer you a hearty welcome to this Island. We deem it a privilege to be the first to welcome you on your return home from your great mission in the West.

We have watched with joy and thankfulness the success with which the mission has, under God's blessing, been crowned. You have proclaimed to the nations of Europe and America the Hindu ideal of a universal religion harmonizing all creeds, providing spiritual food for each soul according to its needs and lovingly drawing it unto God. You have preached the Truth and the Way taught from remote ages by a succession of Masters whose blessed feet have walked and sanctified the soil of India, and whose gracious presence and inspiration have made her through all her vicissitudes the Light of the World.

To the inspiration of such a Master, Sri Ram Krishna Paramahansa Deva, and to your self-sacrificing zeal Western nations owe the priceless boon of being placed in living contact with the spiritual genius of India, while to many of our own countrymen, delivered from the glamour of western civilization, the value of our glorious heritage has been brought home.

By your noble work and example you have laid Humanity under an obligation difficult to repay, and you have shed fresh lustre upon our Mother-land. We pray that the grace of God may continue to prosper you and your work, and

We remain, &c., &c."

Errata.—P. 79. ¶ 3, line 6, for "Bose" read "Mitter;" 4, before "floating" insert "still." Footnote on same page, omit "B A."

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Bhakti.

In the whole course of a soul's journey, beginning from the very beginning of time and never resting until it fully knows and realises itself as the one thing existing in all the universe—*Ekamevādewityam Brahma*—the one God without a second—few events are more momentous and epoch-making in their nature than the springing up of strong and genuine *bhakti* or love and devotion towards God. This *bhakti* transforms the whole human nature; when one obtains it, verily one is "born again"—born not from the mother's womb into the "false life" of sin and sorrow, but born into the truer and larger life which all of us are destined to enter into some day or other. Sincere love towards God makes man a *Dwija* or twice-born much more really than any ceremony can do. Once a man obtains, by his *punya* or the virtue of his good actions during a long course of lives, this blessing of true devotion to the Supreme, life obtains for him a larger meaning and the world gets transfigured by his love into Heaven. He is no longer the man he was before; communion with the Source of all love, purifies his nature and elevates him to the rank of a God-man. Everything that he sees, everything that he hears and feels, becomes filled with a new and ethereal poetry, all for his enjoyment, and he is rocked gently and sweetly in the cradle of love by a motherly Providence till he loses himself in a blissful union with the Divine, the ineffable glory of which the most poetic Upanishads vainly struggle to render in the language of words.

The real *bhakta* is one in several thousands of men. Even in so spiritual a country as ours, the number of *bhaktas*, excluding of course the *soi-disant*, the fanatical, the superstitious, and the sectarian, may be counted on one's fingers. When we see what *bhakti* really means, the cause for its being so rare a thing will become apparent. *Bhakti* is love which the wise have for God, and which is as intense and unrelenting as the love which the non-discriminating have for the fleeting objects of the

senses. 'Its nature is extreme devotion (*premarūpa*.) "Love is immortal," says Nārada, "obtaining which man becomes perfect, becomes immortal, becomes satisfied; obtaining which he desires nothing, grieves not, hates not, does not delight in sensuous objects, makes no efforts for selfish ends; knowing which, he becomes intoxicated with joy, transfixed and rejoices in the Self. It cannot be made to fulfil desires for its nature is renunciation." The *bhakta* is happy only in unrelenting communion with God, and finds the greatest misery in forgetting Him. "The days on which I failed to sing of Him are days on which I did not really live," says a great sage. "The only blessing I crave from Thee," said Prahlāda, the ideal lover, "is not to forget Thee, even if I be born as a worm or reptile." The longing for God which the real *bhakta* has, is well illustrated in the Upanishads. "Choose sons and grandsons," said Yama to Nachiketas, "who may live a hundred years, choose herds of cattle, choose elephants and gold and horses, choose the wide-expanded earth, and live thyself as many years as thou listest. . . I will make thee enjoyer of all desires, all those desires that are difficult to gain in the world of mortals, all those desires ask thou according to thy pleasure,—these fair ones of heaven with their cars, with their musical instruments; for the like as they are not to be gained by men. Be attended by them, I will give them to thee." Unlike most of us whom infinitely lesser and vainer things are enough to intoxicate and madden, Nachiketas had only one reply—"The boon which I have to choose, is what I said, viz., the knowledge of the *Ātman*" (*Kath. Upa.*, I, 23—27). Here is an example of the real *bhakta*. The glory of such rare flowers of humanity may be realised when we remember what Sri Krishna says again and again concerning them—"I am in my lover and he is in Me." (*Gītā*, IX, 29) "I bear all the burden of my lovers' concerns" (*Ibid*, IX, 22.) "Those who preferring only Me leave all works for Me, and, free from the worship of others (Cupid, Mammon, Mars, and others of the brotherhood), contemplate and serve Me alone,—I presently raise up from the ocean of

this region of mortality." (*Ibid*, XII, 6, 17) "Place thy heart on Me, O Arjuna, and discover Me by thy understanding, and thou shalt without doubt hereafter enter into Me." (*Ibid*, XII, 8).

Bhakti is the most natural and at least in the earlier stages the best means for drawing the mind away from sensuous objects and enabling it to realise God. We are miserably steeped in ignorance, and suffer every moment to be led astray by those 'traitors in the camp,' our passion-filled senses and our mad monkey-like mind, which roves about in a silly and purposeless fashion, without any rest either at day or night. It is really melancholy to reflect upon the villainous and nomadic ramblings of the human mind, and more especially, upon our miserable inability to check its wicked and truant disposition. Says Sankara, "The five creatures, the deer, the elephant, the butterfly, the fish and the bee come to grief in gratifying a single sense, viz., sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell, respectively. Then what to say of man who has all the five senses to please?" "Man is a pendulum betwixt a tear and a smile," said Byron, but this but feebly expresses our situation. The motions of a pendulum are measured, and what a poor simile is that for the reckless and unruly adventurer within us. The same mind, however, which is our worst enemy when left to itself, is our most precious help-mate when tutored and regulated. 'The mind is the cause for both the bondage and emancipation of man' (*Amir. Bhin. Upa.* also *Gītā*, VI, 5, 6.) "O Mind! Why wanderest thou so wickedly?" said Tāyumanavar, addressing his mind, "a thousand times have I advised thee to cease rambling and seek Him whom no amount of disputation, no amount of *hata-yoga* practices, nor even a knowledge of the Vedās could discover; check thy rambles or I shall kill thee." Again, when by the proper subjugation of the mind and the blessings of the Guru he had realised the truth, he exclaimed, "My mind, who hast made me know thy real nature and realise my real divinity, thou hast proved my best friend, my real teacher, and my life's best saviour." The use of *bhakti* consists in bribing the mind to give up its low and blind attachment to the objects of the senses for the sake of the Father of love and the Source of all things. It is the easiest, the most natural, and, at the same time, the best means for inducing the mind to turn away from appearances and find its final refuge and abiding place in the Fountain of all wisdom, in the ineffable glory of the great boundless *Satchitananda*, the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of this real-seeming world, the one Supreme Being, who yet is unchanged, unchangeable, and eternal.

Man runs headlong in his pursuit after pleasure, and when, in the course of his pandering to the senses, nature administers some sound blows, he finds, in the language of the Upanishads, that what is good is different from what is pleasant, and cries for help from the Father

that is in Heaven. Here are the earliest germs of *bhakti*. The feeling of dependence slowly matures into love, and, in the words of Sri Krishna, "after many lives, man learns that all that exists is Vāsudeva and worships Me; very rare is such a good man." (*Gītā*, VII, 19). To see God, and Him alone, in all the diverse phenomena of the universe, to rejoice in the wealth of His infinite manifestation and revel in the realisation of the truth that, behind the illusion of the universe, the Brahman alone really is and that "It is not of a gross body, It is not subtle, not long, not wide, not red, not viscid, not shadow, not darkness, not air, not ether, not adhesive, not taste, not smell, not eye, not ear, not speech, not mind, not light, not life, not entrance, not measure, not within, not without" (*Brih. Aran. Upa.*, VIII, iii, 8.) What a privilege this realisation, and how blessed the love which deserves it! Truly says Nārada, "Inexpressible is the nature of love, like the taste of a dumb man, devoid of the three qualities, without desires, ever increasing, continuous, having the nature of subtle perception. Having obtained love, the *bhakta* sees that alone, hears that alone, speaks that alone, and thinks that alone. Worshipers who have this one object in life are the greatest. With choking voice and hairs standing on end, and with tears talking to each other of love, they purify their families in the world. They are the source of holiness in holy places. They make any work good work, and scriptures Holy Scriptures. They are full of divinity. Their forefathers rejoice. The Gods dance with joy. This earth finds protectors. Among them no distinction is to be made of caste, learning, beauty, birth, wealth, occupation, &c., because they are His." "In their hearts," to quote the words of a great Muslim mystic, "there is the great ocean of divine love, the world present and the world to come are but as figures reflected in it; and as it rises and falls, how can they remain? He who plunges in that sea and is lost in it, finds perfect peace."

"The vast majority of men," says Swāmi Vivekānanda, "are atheists. I am glad that, in modern times, another set of atheists has come up in the Western world, the materialists, because they are sincere atheists; they are better than these religious atheists, who are insincere, talk about religion, and fight about it, and yet never want, it, never try to realise it, never try to understand it. Remember those words of Christ—'Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.'.....A disciple went to his master and said: him, 'Sir, I want religion.' The master looked at the young man, and did not speak; only smiled. The young man came every day, and insisted that he wanted religion. But the old man knew better than the young man. One day, when it was very hot, he asked the young man to go to the river with him, and take a plunge. The young man plunged in, and the old man after him, and held the young man down under the water by main force. When the young man had struggled for a good while, he let him

go, and, when the young man came up, asked him what he wanted most while he was under the water. 'A breath of air,' the disciple answered. 'Do you want God that way? If you do, you will get Him in a moment.' Until you have that thirst, that desire, you cannot get religion, however you struggle with your intellect, or your books, or your forms. Until that thirst is awakened in you, you are no better than any atheist, only that the atheist is sincere, and you are not."

This 'thirst for God' is what is called *bhakti*. It is not, however, always accompanied by *guṇa* or wisdom, which alone can bring about salvation. All *gnānis*, i.e., wise men who have realised God are *bhaktas*, but all *bhaktas* are not necessarily *gnānis*. The reason is, it is possible to love God without fully knowing His real *swarūpa* or form. Indeed it is impossible to climb up all at once to the absolute Brahman. Just as a man has to sit before lying down, so the natural way to the Abstract God lies through the worship of outward and mental images formed of Him. "In whatever form a man worships Me, even so I appear unto him," said Śrī Krishna (*Gītā*, IV, 11). The real *bhakta*, though he might begin with idol worship, gradually finds in the image before him the symbol of omnipresence, divine grace, boundless power, and eternal life. "O God Siva," sings a Sivite saint addressing the *Sivalingam* in a particular shrine, "who hast Thy dwelling in Tiruperundurai, Thou who hast blest me, and Whom, forgetful of all else, I contemplate as the Sun of Wisdom, shining in my mind after dispelling the darkness therein, I examine atom after atom, and there is not one particle of matter which is outside Thee, but Thou art not naught that is visible, and yet naught exists without Thee. Ah! how could one know Thee as Thou art." To the real *bhakta*, the images in the temple are all so many different forms of God; and when in due course he attains wisdom, those images obtain for him a fuller meaning and speak to him of the indescribable abstract God whom he has realised. Thus sings Pattanattu Pillai, the great Dravidian sage, "O God Siva, Thy wearing the moon on Thy head is to show that Thou art the Lord of wisdom; Thy holding the Trisūl is to show that Thou art Thyself the Trinity; Thy riding on the bull is to show that Thou art the God of goodness; though boundless be Thy glory, Thou art as small as my heart could hold; though formless be Thy form, all the universe is Thy manifestation; Though Thou canst not be made by the hand of man. Thou willingly takest any form Thy lover gives Thee; though Thou art in truth alone without a second, Thou art the Lord of so many souls; though Thou art every where, Thou livest not with the wicked."

Worshipping God through images and symbols, or as *Īśvara*, the Lord of the Universe (*saguna*), instead of as the absolute, changeless and unmanifest *Brahman* (*nirguna*), is, of course, not the highest form of worship, but even of this the majority of men in the world are not really capable. *Nirguna* worship is much more difficult than *saguna*. "Those whose minds are attached to My invisible nature have the greater labor to encounter," said Krishna (*Gītā*, XII, 5). *Saguna* worship is therefore called *apara bhakti* or the lower form of devotion. It is of course an illusion, because it mistakes physical or mental images for the formless God. There are, however, two kinds of illusions known in the Vedānta as *samvādi-bhrama* and *viśamvādi-bhrama*. The following is an example of the latter. Suppose a light is kept in a closed room and casts its rays through the keyhole, and a man mistaking the rays for a gem, runs up to

the keyhole, the gem is not to be found either in the keyhole or in the room; the illusion in this case is called *viśamvādi-bhrama*, because it did not lead the man to the thing sought for. If, instead of the light, there had been a real gem casting its rays through the keyhole, the man attracted by them might have easily discovered the gem, though not in the keyhole yet inside the room; the illusion in this case is called *samvādi-bhrama*, as it somehow leads to the wished-for object. The *saguna* worship or *apara bhakti* is in its nature *samvādi-bhrama*, because it finally leads to the realisation of the *nirguna Brahman*. On the other hand our endless pursuit after sense-objects is *viśamvādi-bhrama*, as it leads us more and more away from the happiness and peace of mind which we seek. One illusion cures another and in this homeopathic treatment, the mind which is attracted and repulsed by turns by the illusory, fleeting things of the world is gradually induced to seek refuge and consolation in the highest of illusions, *Īśvara*, the Lord of the world, the reflection, so to speak, in the mirror of *māyā*, of pure *Chaitanya*, the absolute, attributeless *Brahman*, who alone really is.

This *bhakti* is of three kinds—*bāhya* or external, *ananya* or the exceptionless, and *ekānta* or the solitary. The passionate adoration of the Deity when the *bhakta* flies to him for refuge from the miseries of existence, voiced forth in language like the following—"My father Īśa's feet are cool like the music of a faultless Vina, or the gentle light of the evening moon, or like zephyr which sweetly blows from the south"—and indeed, all worship of God as a being outside us and worthy of adoration, is *bāhya bhakti*. *Ananya bhakti* is generally defined as the worship of one particular Deity in preference to all others. In a truer sense, however, it means the worship of all deities, without exception, as so many forms of a particular Deity chosen for worship (*Īśhta Devatā*), as when Nammālwār, the great Vaiṣṇavite saint, sings, "Him who is himself all, Him who is the source of all animate and inanimate existences, Him the ancient one who is Himself (i. e., Vishnu) and Siva and Brahma in manifestation, Him who is sweeter than honey, milk and sugarcane and nectar, the One who dwells in my body, mind and life, Him I felt and realised." In the same way, Appar, the Sivite saint, sings, "He who is like honey and milk and who is the living light, He, the great one, who is Himself Vishnu and Brahma, and pervades the roaring sea and mountain chains, has his dwelling in Chidambaram; and the days on which I failed to sing of Him are days on which I really had no life." Seeing all other deities in one's *Īśhta Devatā* is *ananya bhakti*. Whatever the chosen deity, the *bhaktas* really worship only the same God. To quote from Nammālwār, "Worship, O ye men, Brahma, Vishnu, or Śiva. Study them, know them, and sing of them again and again. Whatever ye worship, ye worship the same Being." "As all rain falling from the skies finds its way into the ocean, the prayers addressed to all deities go to the one Adorable Being" is a part of the Brahmin's daily prayer. "Even those who worship other gods through ignorance, worship only Me, though in the wrong way," says Śrī Krishna (*Gītā*, IX). *Ekānta bhakti* consists in being absorbed in the contemplation of the manifold qualities of God (*Anantaguna-kalyāṇa*), His infinite mercy, His omnipotence, His mother-like tenderness to *bhaktas*, His omniscience, His purity, and His faultless glory. "The endless one who has mixed with me," says Nammālwār, "no words can express. Say ye then how could I express the unspeakable." Again, "He who is

of the colour of the clouds, who wears a bright crown and has four arms, who holds the bright Chakra, the Sanka and the Gatha, He lives within me." Such mixing such indwelling, such ineffably blissful absorption is *Ekānta bhakti*, the highest form of *saguna* worship.

How *apara* or the lower *bhakti* leads to *para* or supreme *bhakti*, and how the *saguna* God develops in the mind of the Bhakta into the *nirguna Brahman*, will be considered on a future occasion.

The Ethical Code of India.

The Ethical Code of India has been of a very high order. Truth is the highest manifestation of law—divine and human. Nature is truth; Time is truth; the whole universe is truth; life and death—the bounds of human existence—are the severest of truths. This fact has been recognized from time immemorial in the land of the Himalayas. The first and most potent of Scriptural injunctions has been—

Nānurutam vadet,

i.e., Tell not an untruth. The most popular and powerful among the illustrations of this furnished by history and tradition has been the story of Harischandra. Kingdom, wife, and child are some of the most coveted objects of men. Innumerable and heinous are the lies that men have told for the acquisition and possession of kingdoms and empires. The empire of Anruugzib was a fabric of lies maintained on a broad basis of dissimulation. But, in the moral scales of Harischandra, neither kingdom nor wife nor child nor all the pleasures appurtenant thereto could weigh against truth. The tragic-comedy setting forth his eventful life, has been the means of redeeming many a soul that has wavered between truth and falsehood. Some have thought that there has been a good deal of lying among the Indian people, and that this is a proof of their want of regard for truth. Time was when the Saxons in England were noted for lying. This was after the Norman conquest. Even so, after the Muhammadan conquest of India, the Indian people, as a subject race, took to lying as an expedient of necessity. History may prove that in the British Raj, wherein there has been less of tyranny and cruelty, the lying propensities of the Indian people have considerably diminished in force, and that a continuance of such free and beneficent rule may, in the long run, convert the Indian people into a nation of perfect truth-speakers, or, in other words, restore them to the position they enjoyed as lovers of truth prior to the downfall of their political power.

The next great virtue that humanity has prized is gratitude. Vālmiki says—*Kṛitāya prāṇikartavyam eṣa dharmah sanātanaḥ*. This in substance means:—"When a man has done you a kindness you must return it—this is eternal law." He further says:—*Kṛitaghne nāsti nishkritih*. This in substance means:—"An ungrateful man can never be redeemed." That the first and greatest of Indian poets simply told the truth, as illustrated by the character of the people themselves from time to time, will be evidenced by the viceregal and gubernatorial addresses that are delivered in the country. A former viceroy of India was very near entering the Hindu Pantheon as an *avatār*, because his kind and sympathetic disposition, which made him attempt many things for the good of the people under his charge, evoked extraordinary feelings of gratitude. Nay, this manifestation of gratitude by the Indian

people has been counted a weakness by their more nutter-of-fact rulers. An old Anglo-Indian gentleman, who resided at Kensington, and who was gathered unto his fathers after having been fed from the Indian revenues for over three-score years, is said to have called these displays of thankfulness in the Indian people—games of gratitude. No doubt, there is some warrant for saying so, from the prolific character of these manifestations of thankfulness. Sometime ago, a number of Indian gentlemen went in a body to Calcutta from Madras by one of the coasters. The captain was kind and sympathetic, as all captains should be, and as most captains are. The Indian gentlemen got up a long address expressive of their gratitude, and read it out to the captain in the presence of a large assembly. The captain received the address, and put it into his pocket with a smile indicative of pleasure and surprise. Instances like these have induced Englishmen, who are so famous as a nation for self-respect, and regard for individual rights and privileges, to denominate this feeling in the Indian people as a weakness incidental to their position as a subject race, who ever regard it a favor to obtain a concession from their rulers, howsoever meagre the benefit may be. But all this only proves how strongly the feeling of gratitude has been implanted in the Indian people, and how ready they are to manifest it in season and out of season.

Regard for the parental position and authority has been another great virtue in the moral code of man. Some have considered this an essentially oriental virtue. The practical illustration of it in China has been proverbially grand. In India, the Scripture said long long ago—*Mātru devo bhava, Pitru devo bhava*. This means—"Regard your mother as a deity; regard your father as a deity." The effect that has been given to it in the daily life of the people has been simply marvellous. To this day, father and mother are the *Zares and Penates*, as they would put it in the West, of every Indian household that has any regard for Scripture or Scriptural observances. Like the sun, moon, and more important planets in the heavens, these are some of the pre-eminent orbs in the moral Zodiac of mankind. Innumerable are the virtues that regulate the human mind, and that like the nebulae in the starry regions shed their own light in their spheres. Most of these will be found illustrated in the writings of our country. As an instance, we may refer to the story of *Sāvitry* and *Satyavān*, so often told in our books, wherein that most wholesome of human virtues—adhesion to the conjugal tie under all circumstances—finds such powerful elucidation.

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Silence is Golden.

Three men were once going to Heaven together. On their way, they observed a kite carrying off a serpent; one of them, said, "Ah what a pity this poor serpent is thus carried off by the wicked kite!" and at once he fell down to earth. Seeing his fate, another of his companions exclaimed, "The wicked serpent well deserves its fate;" and at once, he too fell down. The third kept quiet, and safely reached Heaven.

The wise man never hastens to judge, but always silently acquiesces in the ways of Providence.

An Unconscious Prophecy.

Once upon a time, there lived at Benares a great sage by name Nirgunānanda Saraswati. Like a beautiful jasmine flower that knows not the perfume it breathes around, he was the unconscious source of a most beautiful and elevating influence which purified all that came in contact with him. The inner calmness of such sages, the beatitude that overflows their hearts and shows itself out in all their thoughts, words and deeds, nay, in every line of their faces, their universal benevolence, their extreme humility, their boundless love for humanity, their readiness to sacrifice themselves for the sake of those that seek their help, are among some of the divinest qualities which mark them out from the rest of mankind. Swāmi Nirgunānanda was really one of the most eminent of the sages that are, even in our holy land, only few and far between. He was one of those who bring down Heaven to earth and themselves become God even in this mortal coil. He was very learned in Sanskrit, chiefly in sacred literature; and it was a privilege to hear him talk with all the eloquence of sincerity, all the devotion of a pure heart, and all the sweetness of his divine realisation. He had only one topic—God; and like the true lover that he was, he delighted to view that only object in all manner of ways. Never would he descend even for the space of a second from the high plane of thought in which Suka, Janaka, Jada Bharata, and other sages rejoiced to dwell. His easy accessibility, combined with his other qualities, gathered around him a pretty large number of disciples, some of whom were very earnest in seeking that Lord of Thieves (*Tashakānam Pati*) as he has been styled—because He hides Himself from all—the *Paramātman* or God.

Among those that were attached to the great master, was a certain Brahmin of the South, named Nārāyana Sāstri. After great trials and sufferings in life, he had learnt to seek refuge in God; and having sought in vain for a long time for a *guru* who would lead him along the narrow way of divine realisation, he at last came to Swāmi Nirgunānanda. No sooner did he see the divinity that clearly shone in the face of the great sage, than he fell down at his feet, crying, "Here at last I take my shelter, oh God, Oh my Gurn, thou alone must protect me, and I the poorest of men now seek thy most potent help. The poor ship of my life has been tossed over on the stormy ocean of *samsāra* (worldly existence) and has now at last reached a safe harbour, where it must find its rest or perish." Nirgunānanda kindly took him up in his arms; and wiping away his tears with his orange-coloured cloth, asked him what exactly he wanted, adding that he would most willingly do anything for him that lay in his power. The poor Brahmin was rejoiced at the soft words of the great sage, and humbly besought to be saved from the misery of worldly existence and led on towards God. The Swāmi replied, "To those that sincerely seek Him, God is never far off. He, that infinite Ocean of mercy, is the humblest servant of His lovers; and nothing perhaps pleases Him more than to be commanded. Just call Him by loving names, and He is yours at once. If you want Him to be your father, He is your father at this very moment. If you desire to have Him as your friend, He is so at once. Or think of Him as mother or as a dear lover—even, He is at once at your service. Oh! who could be kinder than He from whom all kindness flows, or who could be sweeter than He who is sweetness itself? Blessed indeed are they that seek Him. Only, my son, you should seek Him sincerely. From the heart

that is true He conceals nothing; but the divinity of His presence, the sweetness of His love is far away from those that are not sincere. As for me, I am yours at this very moment, ready to do anything for you that would comfort you." The gentle words of the Swāmi were like nectar to the grieving heart of poor Nārāyana; and he, again falling at his feet and bathing them with his tears, exclaimed, "My Lord, my only friend, my master, from this moment I am thy child, and I resign myself entirely to thy divine care." Nirgunānanda consoled him; and greatly pleased with the sincerity of his young visitor's devotion, promised to do for him all that lay in his humble means.

A few days passed on, and Nārāyana was listening with rapt attention to every word that fell from his master's lips. Like the Chātaka bird, fabled or real, that ever keeps open its mouth for the rain drop that might fall from heaven, he longed to have now and then a word from his Swāmi, if only one; and as soon as he had it, like a miser poring intently over his treasures in a lonely place, he would retire to some calm retreat close by, to muse over his master's teachings. Nirgunānanda found in him a very worthy *chela*, already possessed of the four great qualifications for discipleship (*Sādhana Chatushtaya*, i.e., 1. the discrimination between the real and non-real, 2. utter indifference to the fruits of one's action, 3. patience, calmness, etc., 4. a strong desire for salvation).

One day, as our young friend was sitting under a large Banyan tree close by the *āśrama*, the Swāmi observed him rapt in serene contemplation; and, pleased with the calm expression of his face and the intelligence of his features, thought within himself, "This young man is the youngest of my disciples, and apparently the worthiest. I should like to know if he is married, or whether he has yet to experience the stormy passions of the married state. Renunciation after experience is the safest, for, otherwise, the poor man might tumble down during his ascent." A few minutes after, Nārāyana rose from his meditation and entered the *āśrama*. His master asked him to sit by his side; and after a brief conversation on the subject of the morning's instruction, questioned him if he was married or a bachelor. He replied that he was married, but had lost his wife. The Swāmi immediately observed, "Our world is full of wonders; there are some persons who, on account of some domestic bereavement or calamity, fly to philosophy for refuge; in most of these cases, they do not understand themselves rightly, and fall back. This of course may not be the case with you—," but Nārāyana, almost interrupting him, said, "My lord, I had an earnest desire for philosophy long before I was married; and even my marriage was against my will; and my seeking shelter under your feet is due to no domestic calamity, but to my intense thirst for salvation."

Day after day, Nārāyana's store of knowledge increased; and he was in due course initiated into the mysteries of practical realisation, which a *guru* alone can reveal. A few years passed, and Swāmi Nirgunānanda leaving Nārāyana and other disciples in the Mutt*, proceeded, on what is called the *sauchiraj samādhi*, towards the south, visiting the different holy places. The object of such a travel is that persons having qualifications for discipleship but not yet possessed of a *guru*, might, if so ordained, be benefited by it. In the course of his travels, the

* The place where a *guru* and his disciples live.

† Travel made for the benefit of qualified men seeking for a teacher—so called because the meditation of the travelling sage should be unaffected by change of place and surroundings. It is a practice specially prescribed by sages for themselves and their disciples.

Swāmi came to a small village on the banks of the Tāmbraparni, a river in the Tinnevely District. It is one of those places we very often meet with, especially in the south, where nature is profuse and where the contemplative man finds an undisturbed calmness in the outer world, which singularly harmonises with that of his own inner soul. Naturally, Nirgunānanda chose a retired corner in a grove on the river side, and was enjoying that ineffable peace and blessedness which ages alone can obtain. A young woman returning home from the river, happened to see the saintly figure of our Swāmi sitting under a tree in the attitude of contemplation, and led by the holy impulse of reverence, a quality which still lingers in our women, noiselessly approached him and stood at a respectful distance till he awoke from his meditation; and on his waking, she prostrated herself at his feet. The Swāmi blessed her, saying, "God grant you long life, worthy children, and a happy home."

No sooner did the blessing cross the lips of the sage, than the young woman burst into tears, and weeping, said, "O lord, your blessing can be of no avail for I never once saw my husband after marriage; and it is now nearly fifteen years since he went away. God knows where." But the sage calmly replied, "My child, *Rāmadwīr nābibhāshate*, i.e., Rāma (Atman or God) will never tell a lie; the words came to me of their own accord and they are His." The Brahminess quietly bowed to him and went her way. She had a vague hope in her mind that the words of the sage might, in some mysterious manner come to pass. The next morning, she again paid her respects to him; and to visit him and sweep and clean the place which he occupied thenceforth became a part of her daily routine.

By this time, the disciples, not having heard of the whereabouts of their guru for a long time past, went in search of him; and after long wanderings, came to the place where he was, just when the Brahmin woman was paying her daily respects to him. Nārāyana saw her and started back; the woman saw him and at once burst out with tears of joy and said, pointing to Nārāyana, "This is my husband, this is my husband, my lord." The Swāmi was surprised at the exclamation of the woman, and looking at Nārāyana, who was trembling with fear from head to foot, asked him what the matter was. The poor man at once fell down at his feet, and, weeping, said, "My master, I have deceived you, I have told a lie to yourself. Such was my fear. So kindly excuse me, oh lord. A fool that I was, I was afraid to tell you that my wife was alive lest you might not initiate me. I told you I was a widower, my lord; I confess my sin and beg your gracious pardon. Any punishment you may choose for me—nothing can be too severe for such a sinner—I am quite ready to undergo, my lord. Punish me as severely as you can, only take me back into your favour."

Nirgunānanda rejoiced within himself at the drama that had been enacted in his presence; and, addressing the woman, exclaimed, "*Rāmadwīr nābibhāshate*.—His words do not fail. How inscrutable are His ways!" Meanwhile, Nārāyana waxed louder in his exclamations of repentance; and to him the sage coolly observed, "Be not afraid, my son, there is no harm done; you were afraid when there was no occasion for it. In your ignorance you thought that to be freed from the married life was a necessary condition for obtaining wisdom. Marriage may not be a necessity in some cases, but, as a rule, renunciation after sufficient experience of the married state is the safest. Woman is difficult to conquer; and great men like

Viśwāmitra, Parāśara, Tondaradipodi Ālwar and others have been led astray in the very midst of their severe penances. Renunciation proceeding from sufficient experience or satiety is certainly much more firm than that which proceeds from occasional disgust, family accidents and the like. Your fear was perfectly unnecessary; and for this sin of lying there is a *prāyascittam* (purification), and that is to do as I tell you. Join your wife, live with her, make yourself and her happy; and this is the only remedy." Nārāyana Sastri exclaimed, "Oh master, save me from this punishment. Even death would be more welcome than again to bind myself with the very chains which I have been trying so long to break asunder, save me oh lord;" and so saying he fell at his master's feet. Nirgunānanda raised him from the ground and said, "My child, you have not yet understood what true renunciation is. Attachment and freedom belong to the mind; and so long as that is unattached, there can be no fear. The true warrior does not shrink from battle, but boldly faces it and wins it; and similarly, he is the true sage who does not take fright and fly away from the strife of the world, but, keeping himself in it, lives totally unattached to it. Fear is weakness, and shews that perfection is yet far off. Arjuna was advised not to shrink from war with fear, but to fight it on bravely and unattached."*

Nārāyana felt the truth of his Guru's teaching, joined his wife and lived with her, contributing to her happiness without, at the same time, entangling his unbounded spirit into bonds again.

In the above story, we have a prophecy fulfilled in a remarkable way. There is a power in the pure heart which often works wonders. Prophecies, strange cures, remarkable intuitive flashes, sudden inspiration, and several other phenomena apparently miraculous, are among the ordinary privileges of the pure mind. The way in which genuine sages—gods on earth—get on in life just like 'the fowls of the air' and 'the lilies of the field' without any thought for the morrow, and the mysterious manner in which their wants are divined and provided for, to all appearance, by an unknown power, would readily strike all that care to observe. But the miracles cease the moment the mind gets impure. Let the prophet get conscious of his prophecy and think highly of his powers, the oracle becomes at once dumb, for the mind has become impure. The prophet strives to continue a prophet, but that is impossible, and the power that came to him of its own accord now eludes his grasp. He loses his power, but tries at least to preserve his fame; and imposture and humbug, so very often met with, are the result. Wise men care not for the powers that might come to them or the noise they might make. They never take the credit of such powers to themselves; they feel it is not theirs and say they are Rama's, Krishna's, or God's. They are not the least anxious whether the words coming from their lips are fulfilled or not. Look at Nirgunānanda's cool reply to the woman when she exclaimed that his blessing was impossible of fulfilment. The power of prophecy or even the power to raise the dead cannot drag down to the plane of the lower self (*ahankāra*) the sage's mind concentrated all upon the Absolute Brahman.

A RECLUSE.

* Compare Nirgunānanda's advice with the following passage of the Chāndogya Upanishad:—Having studied the Veda in the house of a tutor and having paid to the guru what is his due, one should dwell with his family in a healthy country, reading the Vedas, bringing up virtuous sons and pupils, devoting himself with all his senses to the universal Soul and injuring no created being (VIII, XV)—Ed.

Gna-na-Yoga.

(CLASS LECTURES DELIVERED IN-AMERICA)

Specially sent for this paper.

BY

SWAMI VIVEKA-NANDA.

No. 1. SA'DHANA'S OR PREPARATION.

First among the qualifications required of the aspirant for *Gnāna* or wisdom come *Sama* and *Dama*, which may be taken together. They mean the keeping of the organs in their own centres without allowing them to stray out. I shall explain to you first what the word organ means. Here are the eyes; the eyes are not the organs of vision but only the instruments. Unless the organs also are present, I cannot see, even if I have eyes. But given both the organs and the instruments—the organs being in what are called the nerve-centres in the brain—the mind attaches itself to these two, vision takes place. So, in each act of perception, three things are necessary—first, the external instruments, then, the internal organs, and lastly, the mind. If any one of them be absent, then there will be no perception. The mind then acts through two agencies—one external, and the other internal. When I see things, my mind goes out, becomes externalised; but suppose I close my eyes and begin to think, the mind does not go out, it is internally active. But, in either case, there is activity of the organs. When I look at you and speak to you, both the organs and the instruments are active. When I close my eyes and begin to think, the organs are active, but not the instruments. Without the activity of these organs, there will be no thought. You will find that none of you can think without some symbol. In the case of the blind man, he has also to think through some figure. When, for example, he thinks through figures of touch, as heat and cold, hardness and softness, there will act in the mind, and so his organs of touch will be active at the time he is thinking. The organs of sight and hearing are generally very active. You must bear in mind that by the word "organ" is meant the nerve-centre in the brain. The eyes and ears are only the instruments of seeing and hearing, and the organs are inside. If the organs are destroyed by any means, even if the eyes or the ears be there, we would not see or hear. So in order to control the mind, we must first be able to control these organs. To restrain the mind from wandering outward or inward, and keep the organs close to their centres, is what is meant by the words *sama* and *dama*. *Sama* consists in not allowing the mind to externalise, and *dama*, in checking its internal activity.

Then comes the next preparation, (it is a hard task to be a philosopher!) *titiksha*, the most difficult of all. It is nothing less than the ideal forbearance—"Resist not evil". It requires a little explanation. We may resist an evil, but at the same time we may feel very miserable. A man may say very harsh things to me, and I may not outwardly hate him for it, may not strike him back, and may restrain myself from getting apparently angry, but anger and hatred may be in my mind, and I may feel very badly towards that man. That is not non-resistance. I should be without any feeling of hatred or anger, without any thought of resistance; my mind must be the same as if the man had blessed me; and only when I have got to that state, have I attained to non-resistance, and not before. Similarly with regard to the *Abhaya*, the quality of nature, heat and cold, pain and pleasure, one should bear them all with forbearance of all misery, without

even a thought of resisting or driving it out, without even any painful feeling in the mind, or any remorse—this is *titiksha*. Suppose I do not resist something, and some great evil comes thereby, if I have *titiksha*, I would not feel any remorse for not having resisted. When the mind has attained to that state, it has become established in *titiksha*. People in India do extraordinary things in order to practise this *titiksha*. They bear tremendous heat and cold without caring; they do not even care for snow. They go on just as they are, because they take no thought of the body; it is left to itself, as if it were foreign.

The third preparation is *Uparati*, which consists in not thinking of things of the senses. Most of our time is spent in thinking about sense-objects, things which we have seen, or we have heard, which we will see or will hear, things which we have eaten, or are eating, or will eat, places where we have lived, and so on. We think of them or talk of them most of our time. One who wishes to be a *Vedāntin* must give up this habit.

The next qualification required is *Śraddha*, faith. One must have tremendous faith in religion and God. Until he has that, he cannot aspire to be a *gnāni*. A great sage once told me that not one in twenty millions in this world believe in God. I asked him why, and he told me, "Suppose there is a thief in this room, and somehow he gets to know that there is a mass of gold in the next room, and only a very thin partition between the two rooms; what will be the condition of that thief?" I answered, "He will not be able to sleep at all; his brain will be actively thinking of some means of getting at the gold, and he will think of nothing else." Then he replied, "Do you believe that a man believes in God and does not go mad. If a man sincerely believes that there is that immense, infinite mine of bliss, that there is a Being, something whom ought to be the one end and aim of life, and that He can be reached, would not that man go mad in his struggles to reach Him?" Strong faith in God and the consequent eagerness to reach Him constitute *Śraddha*.

Then comes *Samādhi*, or constant practice, nothing is done in a day. Religion, like anything else, cannot be swallowed in the form of a pill; it requires hard and constant practice. The mind can be conquered only by slow and sure practice.

Next is *Mumukshutvam*, the intense desire to be free. Those of you who have read Edwin Arnold's, "Light of Asia", remember his translation of the first sermon of Buddha, where Buddha says,

"Ye suffer from yourselves. None else compels,
None other holds you that ye live and die,
And whirl upon the wheel, and bug and kiss
Its spokes of agony,
Its tire of tears, its nave of nothingness."

All the misery we have is our own choosing; such is our nature. The old Chinaman, who having been kept in prison for 60 years was released on the coronation of a new emperor, exclaimed when he came out that he could not live; he must go back to his horrible dungeon among the rats and mice; he could not bear the light. So he asked them to kill him or send him back to the prison, and he was sent back. Exactly similar is the condition of all men. We run after all sorts of misery, wanting to attain it, and are unwilling to be freed from it. Every day we run after pleasure, and before we reach it, we find it is gone, it has slipped through our fingers. Still we do not cease our mad pursuit, but on and on and on we go, blinded fools that we are!

In some oil mills in India, there is a bullock that goes round to grind the oil; and there is a yoke on the bullock's neck. The Indian people are very kind to animals; they do not like to beat them. But the bullock would stop working if they did not beat it, so they have a device to take the place of beating. They have a piece of wood fixed to the yoke, and on that is a wisp of straw. The bullock is blinded in such a way that it can only look forward, and so it stretches its neck forward to get at this straw; and when it does so, it pushes the piece of wood out a little further; and it makes another attempt with the same result, and yet another, and so on. It never catches the straw, but goes round and round in search of it, and, in doing so, grinds out the oil. In the same way you and I who are born slaves to nature, and money and wealth, and wives and children, are always chasing a wisp of straw, mere chimeras, and going through an innumerable round of lives without obtaining what we seek. The great dream is love; we are all going to love and be loved; we are all going to be happy and never meet with misery, but the more we go towards happiness, the more it goes away from us. Thus the world is going on, society goes on, and we, blinded slaves, have to pay for it without knowing. Study your own lives, and find how little of happiness there is in them, and how little in truth you have gained in the course of this wild-goose-chase of the world.

Seekers after God.

II. SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHANSA.

(Continued from page 79).

The father of Gangāvisṇu was a rich man, and maintained an *atīśāla*, a place where *sādhus* or religious men sojourned during their pilgrimage and obtained daily provisions free. This was a frequent resort of the boy Rāmakrishna, who loved even so early to associate with *sādhus*. Those that came to the *chatram* would decorate him with *namam*, the Vaiṣṇava mark, on the forehead, relate to him religious stories, and teach him pious songs. The boy would often be fed by the *sādhus* with the food they had prepared for themselves. One day he went to the *atīśāla* wearing a new cloth, and returned home only with a *kaupin*, that is, almost naked, like a *sanyāsin*, and painted all over the body with *namams*. Seeing his mother, he exclaimed, "Look, I have decorated myself like a *sādhu*, I do not want any food to-day as I have already taken the *roti* (bread) given by the *sādhus*." Rāmakrishna's school education was of the poorest kind. A copy of the Rāmāyana which he made with his own hand, and which is still preserved, shows how little he learned at school. He was sent to a *pīṭhāśāla* where Vedic mantras and hymns were taught, but even there he did not learn anything. He had, however, a good memory, and accumulated a rich store of *kīrthanas*, lyrics and stories. He sang well and with a sweet voice.

Rāmakrishna had his own way even from his childhood. He was greatly attached to one Dhani of the carpenter caste, a friend of his mother's. This woman took care of him from his birth and throughout his boyhood. She loved him intensely and would, forgetting the prohibitions of caste, feed him from her own hands. One day Dhani told him that she would give him *biksha* first, at his *upanayana* (the thread-wearing ceremony) and he agreed to gratify her wish. So at the

upanayana, he first boldly begged *biksha* of Dhani, but his eldest brother protested against it on the ground of caste. In the end, Rāmakrishna had his own way and took his first *biksha* from Dhani who became his *biksha* mother.

Rāmakrishna was original even in his boyish amusements. He enacted the religious stories he had eagerly learnt; thus he would take his companions to a lonely field, dress himself as Krishna, allot to his companions the parts of Śrīdhām, Sudhām, Kuchela and other friends of Krishna, and play the immortal *līlas* (sports) of Krishna, so well known throughout the country. At other times he would make idols and worship them. Thus passed away the first ten years of Rāmakrishna's life.

When he was fifteen years old, he was married to Sārājanī Devi, the daughter of one Rāmachandra Mukhopādyaḃya, of Jayarāmbati, a village not far from his own. The last school that Rāmakrishna attended was a free school at Jamapakūr which was under the direction of his eldest brother. From there he passed on in the year 1852 to the temple of Dhakshineswar, along with his brother, who was appointed the presiding *pandit* of the place by Rānī Rāshmoni Dāsi, who established the idols of Kālī and Rādhā Krishna in the temple. On the day of the consecration of the idols, there was much eclat, and many were fed. Rāmakrishna fasted that whole day, and in the evening he bought in the bazaar a pice worth of fried rice and ate it.

The temple is situated six miles north of Calcutta, the garden of the temple being on the eastern bank of the Ganges. In the northern side of the garden there was a large Banyan tree, a hut on the southern side now converted into a building, and on the north-east a Bilwa tree. The whole place has in it a peculiar air of solemnity, and is very well fitted to induce religious thoughts even in visitors who are not Hindus. At the temple Rāmakrishna was first employed as *beshkāri*, i.e., one who dresses and adorns the idols; then in the *pūja* of Rādhākrishna; and on his brother's death, Rāshmoni Dāsi appointed him for the *pūja* of Kālī. Rāmakrishna worshipped with extraordinary *bhakti*, decorating the idol with sweet-smelling flowers, or throwing bilwa and jaba leaves at its feet, or singing the songs of *Śakti upāsikas* (the worshippers of the Maternal Divine Energy) like Rāmaprasād, Kamalakānta and others. Standing before the idol with folded arms, he would cry with tears trickling down his face, "Mother, have compassion for me. You have been kind to Rāmaprasād and others. Why not to me? I do not know any Śastras; I am not a *pandit*; I do not know anything, Mother, nor do I wish to know anything. Will you not show mercy on me, mother? I am dying to see you. I do not desire the *aṣṭasiddhis* (the well-known eight psychic powers, *anima*, *mahima*, &c); I do not want fame or name; I long only to see you, and hear you speak, if only one word." He uttered such prayers when he was alone with the idol after the performance of the daily *archan* and *ārati*, and wept. *Bhaktas* entering the temple at the time noticed with wonder the sincere *bhakti* that he had though so young. He devoted all his time to the worship and contemplation of Kālī. By-and-by he became extremely impatient and eager to see Her; and his heart panted after her like that of a young calf towards its mother. All worldly pleasures ceased to interest him. And one night when he was sitting before the Goddess and was crying with his whole heart, "Mother, appear before me," he suddenly became entranced, his whole face and eyes became red, the gaze became vacant, and there was a con-

stant flow of tears which wetted his whole body, and he had to be carried away from the temple. The whole of next day he did not open his eyes, he ate only when he was fed, and remained apparently unconscious. He was, however, frequently crying aloud, 'Ma, Ma' (Mother, Mother) like a baby missing its mother.

What was the real state of his mind during this remarkable occurrence we cannot say. But from the outward signs, and judging by the opinions of *sādhus*, he was suffering from *virāha*, the pain of separation from the beloved one. He had probably seen the Mother: this seeing the Mother should not, however, be confounded with the realisation of God, the great promise of the *Vedānta*. The real God, the real Mother and Father is within; and He is beyond the reach of the senses and the mind, by which latter is here meant that something within us which is a compound of *rajas* and *tamas*. We cannot see God for He is not outside us, but we can become God. We are God unconsciously, and all that is required is that we should know that we are God. We sometimes fancy that God could be seen, and talk of great *bhaktas* as enjoying visions of God; but these visions are in reality the projection, so to speak, in the mental plane of the real God within. "Man wants help from the skies," says Swāmi Vivekānanda, "and the help comes. We see that it comes, but it comes from within, and he mistakes it as coming from without. Sometimes a sick man is lying on his bed and he hears a tap on the door, he gets up and opens the door, he finds nobody, he goes back to his bed and again he hears the tap, he gets up and opens the door and there is nobody. At last he finds that it was his own heart beating which he interpreted as knock at the door. Thus all this vain search after the gods above, gods of the skies, gods of the water, after it has completed the circle comes back to the point from which it started—the human soul—and man finds that the God for whom he was searching in every hill and dale, for whom he was seeking in every little brook of water, in every temple, in little churches, in worse Heavens, that God whom he was even imagining as sitting in Heaven and ruling the world is his own self."

The obtaining of visions, like the remarkable one which Rāmakrishna had, goes a great way towards the realisation of the Deity within, and is a decided proof of rare and genuine *bhakti*, which, drawing the mind away from the fleeting and illusory things of the world, leads it onward by leaps and bounds to the reaching of the transcendental Reality within. Even this much,—what a rare privilege, and how few among us could boast of having obtained a like divine vision!

For six months Rāmakrishna was in the condition of *virāha* described above, after which he gradually recovered his usual state.

(To be continued).

In the Brāhmaloka.

There was a Brāhmin, a religious man and fond in his affections but without deep wisdom. He had a very promising son, of great intellect, who, when seven years old, was struck with a fatal disease and died. The unfortunate father, unable to control himself, threw himself upon the corpse and lay there as one dead. The relatives came and buried the child, and when the father came to himself, he was immoderate in his grief, and behaved like an insane person. He no longer gave way to tears, though he wandered about asking for the residence

of Yama Raja, the King of Death, to beg of him humbly that his child might be allowed to return alive.

Having arrived at a great Brāhmin temple, the sad father went through certain religious rites, and fell asleep. While wandering on in his dream, he came to a deep mountain-pass, where he met a number of *Shramanas* (*ascetics*) who had acquired supreme wisdom. "Kind sirs," he said, "can you not tell me where the residence of Yama Raja is?" And they asked him, "Good friend, why do you want to know it?" Whereupon he told them his sad story, and explained his intentions. Pitying his delusion, the *Shramanas* said, "No mortal man can reach the place where Yama reigns. But some four hundred miles westward, lies a great city in which many good spirits live. Every eighth day of the month Yama visits the place, and there you may see him and ask him for a boon." The Brāhmin, rejoicing at the news, went to the city, and found it as the *Shramanas* had told him. And he was admitted to the great presence of Yama, who, on hearing his request, said, "Your son lives now in yonder Brāhmaloka. Go there and ask him to follow you." Said the happy father, "How does it happen that my son, without having performed one good work, is now living in Paradise?" Yama Raja replied, "He has attained celestial happiness not by performing good deeds, but because he died in faith and love to the Lord and Master. He was a born wise man. 'The heart of love and wisdom spreads, as it were, a beneficent shade from the world of men to the world of gods,' so says Buddha. This glorious utterance is like the stamp of a king's seal upon a royal edict." The happy father hastened to the place, and saw his beloved child all transfigured by the peace and blessedness of heavenly life. He ran up to his boy, and cried, with tears running down his cheeks, "My son, my son, do you not remember me, your father who watched over you with loving care and tended you in your sickness? Return home with me to the world of men." But the boy cast on him a look of pity and replied, "In my present state, I know no such words as father and son, for I am free from delusion. True love knows not limitation, and spreads alike to all, heedless of restricting relations like those of father, mother, son, and brother. I am love itself; and if you also become that, getting free from delusion, and learn to look upon all the world as alike, you will also come here and we can have a happy life together." On this the Brāhmin departed, and, when he woke from his dream, he thought himself of the sweet words of his blessed son, and resolved to acquire that heavenly wisdom which alone can give comfort to an afflicted heart, and, freeing him from delusion, make him love all the world alike.

The above story, which is adapted from a Buddhistic parable, illustrates some splendid truths. Says the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad*, 3rd Brāhmana, 4th Chapter 21 and 22, "As in the embrace of a beloved wife one is unconscious of aught from without or within, so, embraced by the All-knowing soul, this *puruṣa* (he who has attained his highest place) is unconscious of all without or within. This is his true nature when all desires are satisfied, where the only desire is for the soul, where there is no desire, where there is no grief. Then the father is no father, the mother no mother, the worlds no worlds, the gods no gods, the Vedas no Vedas, then the thief is no thief, the murderer of a Brāhmin no murderer of a Brāhmin, the Chandāla no Chandāla, the Pāṇḍaka no Pāṇḍaka (chuckler), the *Shramana* no *Shramana*, the ascetic no ascetic." All that is, is *satya-gṇānam anantam ānandam sarva sārīropādhiṇimuktam*, that which is eternal, all-knowing and blissful and free

from the limitations of any kind of body or form (*Sarvasāropanishad*). Knowing these truths, the sage loves all the world alike, irrespective of distinctions like father, mother, and so on. Says the *Īśvarasyopanishad*. "Whoever beholds all beings in the soul (his *Ātman*) alone and the soul in all beings despises naught. When a man knows that all beings are even his *Ātman*, when all beings have become to him himself, then there is no delusion, no grief." (6 and 7). "He who loves all alike and looks upon other's griefs and joys as his own, he is the highest *yogin*," says Krishna (*Gītā*, VI, 32). "They are called wise men who, seeing the same *Ātman* in all, regard with equal love the cultured and respectful Brāhmin, the cow, the elephant, the dog, and he who eats dogs." (*Gītā*, V, 18).

The real Brahmaloka is the pure mind free from *rajas* and *tamas*, and of unmixed *satwic* disposition. "O emperor, here (in this world) and nowhere else is the true Brahmaloka," said Yāgnavalkya to Janaka.—*Esha Brahmaloke Samrāt iti hovacha*. (*Bṛh. Aru. Upa.*)

(Adapted from 'The Gospel of Buddha'.)

Manki—the Brāhmin Calf-breeder.

Brahmariths value the moral and spiritual instruction imparted by the veteran *Vedāntin*, Bhishma, to his disciple Dharmaja, very highly. It is maintained that the *Sānti* and *Anuśāsana* *parvas* of the *Mahābhārata*, which are full of *purāṇic* episodes illustrative of the great spiritual truths inculcated in the *Upanishads*, are the digests of the spiritual experience of Bhishma and other *Brahmarādins*, who, to popularise the teaching of the *Vedānt* and render it more lucid and intelligible to the masses narrated many *upākhyānas* (anecdotes) touching the characters and spiritual experiences of bygone saints and sages whose lives are worth our study and imitation. *Sānti* and *Anuśāsana* *parvas* of the *Mahābhārata* contain a great deal of practical teaching with practical illustrations. Of the eighteen chapters of the *Mahābhārata* they are supposed to be the most important. *Sānti* means peace of mind, and *anuśāsana* injunction or command. It is a matter of fact that Dharmaja won the field of Kurukshetra at the risk of his peace of mind. His mind was so much ruffled that it did not regain its equilibrium before Bhishma put before him the cases of saints of olden days who obtained peace of mind by the adoption of the line of spiritual and moral conduct promulgated in the *Upanishads*. During this long course of instruction, Dharmaja asked Bhishma, "Sire, how could one who gives himself up to avarice acquire peace of mind?" In reply to this question Bhishma narrated the incidents of the life of Manki, the Brāhmin calf-breeder.

"There was an old Brāhmin by the name of Manki who desired to amass wealth, but found he was doomed to repeated disappointments. At last, with a little remnant of his property he purchased a couple of calves with a yoke for training them to agricultural labour. One day the two calves properly tied to the yoke, were taken out for training in the fields. Shying at the sight of a camel that lay down on the road, the animals suddenly went towards it and fell upon its neck. Enraged at finding the calves fall upon its neck, the camel, endued with great speed, started up and ran at a quick pace, bearing away the two helpless creatures dangling on either side of its neck. Beholding his poor calves thus borne away by that strong camel, and seeing that, being strangled, they were on the point of death, and that any attempt on his part to save

them was of no avail, Manki broke out in the following strain:—'If wealth be not ordained by destiny, it can never be acquired by even a clever man exerting himself with diligence and confidence and accomplishing with skill all that is necessary towards that end. I had before this endeavoured by diverse means and with devotion to earn wealth. Behold this misfortune brought about by destiny to the property I had. The desire for wealth which hitherto possessed my soul has never allowed me to enjoy peace of mind for even a minute. The person that desires happiness should renounce all attachment. Ho, it was well said by Suka while going to the great forest from his father's abode renouncing every thing, "Of these two, viz., one who obtains the fruition of all his desires and one who casts off every wish, the latter is the better." No one could kill desire by gratifying it. It grows on what it feeds. One desire when satisfied gives rise to another. O Desire, thou art the root of evil. To keep myself out of thy reach I shall control my mind whence thou dost emanate. I shall thus put an end to thee. Thou shalt be destroyed with thy roots. The desire for wealth can never bring happiness. There is misery in acquiring it, and if it is lost after acquisition, that is felt as death. When acquired, one is never gratified with its measure, but yearns for more, and becomes greedy. I am now awakened. Do thou, O Desire leave me. Let that desire which has taken refuge in this my body, this compound of the five elements, go whithersoever it chooses. Ye all that are not of the Soul, I have no joy in you, for ye follow the lead of Desire and Cupidity. Abandoning all of you, I shall take refuge in God. Beholding all creatures in myself and devoting my reason to *yoga*, my life to receiving instructions from the wise, and my soul to Brahma, I shall happily rove through the world without attachment of any kind, so that thou mayest not be able to plunge me again into such sorrows. I cast thee off with other passions from my heart. I shall forgive those that slander or speak ill of me. I shall not injure even when injured. With my heart contented and my senses all at ease, I shall live by what I may get. Freedom from attachment, emancipation from desire, contentment, tranquillity, truth, self-restraint, forgiveness, and universal compassion are the qualities which will henceforth distinguish me. Having cast off Desire, great is my happiness now. Like a person plunging in the hot season into a cool lake, I shall soon enter into Brahma. The pleasure which results from the gratification of Desire, or that other purer felicity which one enjoys in Heaven, does not come up to even a sixteenth part of the happiness which comes from the abandoning of desire. Entering into the immortal city of Brahma, i.e., *Jivan Mukta* state, which is attained through wisdom, I shall spend my days happily like a king, my heart free from desire of any kind, and my soul enjoying its identity with the universal Brāhman."

"With these serious remarks, Manki dismissed Desire and did not associate with her any longer," continued Bhishma. "He was happy with the thought that he had up-rooted desire from his mind, which attained such a state of tranquillity as he had not known before. Follow, therefore, in the footsteps of Manki, Dharmaja, unalloyed happiness and perfect peace of mind will be vouchsafed unto you."

Renunciation has been a trait of character peculiar to the Hindus, and it is this principle of renunciation that has guided our people through countless ages. The present civilisation brings us face to face with men who denounce the principles that have conduced to the spiritual

welfare of our land of Philosophy and Religion. Man works according to the ideal before him. A man whose ideal of life is, like that of our ancient *Rishis*, to unravel the mystery of life and death, hates material surroundings and pleasures of the senses. On the other hand, a man whose faculties of observation do not go beyond this transitory life, satisfies himself with material environments. A lover of emancipation (*moksha*) controls his mind and senses, as did Manki of old; and a lover of worldly pleasures is controlled by his mind and senses. This is the difference between a wise man and others. It is therefore one of the primary duties of a lover of *Mukti* (emancipation) to kill his desires, or, if it is not practicable to do so, to reduce them to a minimum, inasmuch as he wishes to enjoy that peace of mind to which the greatest men of the world, sovereigns, statesmen, and warriors are alike strangers.

M. RANGACHARI.

Thoughts on the Bhagavad Gita'.

(Continued from page 78.)

We have stated the case as plainly as possible, and now we shall proceed to look into it closely. What Krishna says may be briefly put as follows. How is it that you talk like a wise man and act like a coward? The wise never grieve either for the living or for the dead, for there is really no death, and what appears to be such is simply a change of coat and nothing else. The *Atman* within our bodies slayeth not nor is slain. It is not born nor does it die. It is ancient and unknowable, no one can work its destruction. It pervades the whole world and is not slain with the body. This *Atman* is never born, gets never decayed, and never dies, and never grows; and he that knows It to be such—whom does he slay and who could slay him? Swords pierce It not, fire burns It not, water moistens It not, and winds wither It not. Eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable, ancient, beyond reach of thought, of word or sight, and changeless as the *Atman* is, there is no cause for you, O Arjuna, to grieve."—*Gita*, II, 11-25.

Mr. Caldwell attempts to prove, as we have seen already, the fallacy of this argument by supposing it acted upon in common life. His way of reasoning is perfectly right, and his conclusions are strictly logical; only, his hypothesis is wrong. If the hypothesis is granted, everything else naturally follows; but unfortunately, it is fatally erroneous, and therefore, cannot be granted. He fancies the scene to be acted in common life, and this is wholly unwarranted by what Krishna says at the very outset. Krishna is speaking from the standpoint of a wise man, a *Brahmagñini*, who has known and realised within himself the truth that life and death are phenomenal and illusory, and that the *Atman* which pervades the whole universe is eternal and changeless. A mere intellectual grasp of the great truth will never make a man wise; and, at any rate, it is not of such wise men that Krishna speaks. If a common murderer pleads before the court that the *Atman* neither slays nor is slain, the best thing that the judge could do is to sentence him to such punishment as he deserves, applying his defence to his own case. The judge might retort by saying, 'Friend, since, by hanging you, your *Atman* is never killed, we have sentenced you to be hanged. Of course the man whom you murdered was never really murdered; and just in the same way, by being hanged, you will not really die.'

The illustration which Mr. Caldwell took up is a capital instance of what is familiarly known as *gnāna pāshandatvam* or counterfeit wisdom. Setting aside the Bishop's *pseudo-vedāntin*, we shall turn to consider the words of Krishna from the standpoint of a really wise man. The real *gnāni* knows by reason and experience that he is himself the *Atman*, ancient and unknowable, the One without a second, beside Which there is not even a rush, as the Upanishads would put it, that the body which lives and dies is only an appearance, and has no real existence except on the phenomenal plane.

Not that the world is not, not that you and I and all the other infinite existences in creation are resolved by a logical quibble into a perfect zero. A very great misconception generally obtains among superficial students of the *Vedānta* that it totally denies the existence of this world; and often the question is very naturally put, 'If all this be unreal, why should it have been created?' The *Vedānta* is a subject in approaching which we must always remember the well-known line.—

"Drink deep or taste not the Pierian Spring."

Being the loftiest speculation of the human intellect, it must be approached honestly and with a sincere thirst for knowledge; and the full reality of its highest conclusions can never be grasped except by earnest and thorough-going inquiry and patient practice. Shallow draughts of it will merely intoxicate the brain; and that is why even cultured intellects have, in handling it, been led into miserable pitfalls. What the *Vedānta* says about the world is that it is real, nay, that it is eternal, but its reality and eternality are only relative. The colour of the rose is perfectly real, but it is a fact all the same that it is not in the flower itself. Similarly the limitations of name and form, or space, time and causality, are not in the world itself. 'Things are not what they seem' is an eternal verity. It is as true of the whole world as it is of the rose. Our perception or rather the perception of all created things has an inherent power to distort and colour the things it comes in contact with. What exists is only a boundless, eternal and all-pervading consciousness, *pragnānaghana*, by the side of which the world is a relative reality; just as by the side of the rose as it really is, the colour and other things are only relatively real. We cannot say that our dreams are unreal unless we know the waking state (*jāgra*); and similarly we cannot call the world unreal unless with reference to the changeless, universal *pragnāna* which is called the *Atman*, the only Reality. The world then is just like a dream, nay, it has been called a long dream (*dirgha-swapna*), it is not absolutely unreal, but only relatively so. To ordinary men who have not realized the absolute Reality, the Brahman within, it is practically a complete reality, just as dream is to the man who is dreaming. To those blessed souls who have fully realized 'the Divinity that lies concealed', the *Antaryāmin*, as it is called, the world does not really exist; but that does not mean that they are totally dead even to its appearance. To them it is an appearance which can no longer deceive, a dream from which they have awoken, but still vividly remember, a mirage which has been discovered to be such.

The outward conduct, the *vyavahāra* of these wise men is in no way different from that of others, except that it is regulated by the loftiest ethics and by a love which is as spontaneous as it is universal. They are conscious actors in the drama of the world, having merged their little narrow selves in the ocean of universal self-hood, and are the freest and the most fearless men and the greatest benefactors that,

by example and precept, bless our sad planet. They see themselves in everything and everything in themselves. 'He whose mind is endued with devotion and looketh on all things alike, beholdeth the Supreme Soul in all things and all things in the Supreme Soul.' (*Gītā*, VI, 29). 'He that beholdeth all beings in the *Ātman* and the *Ātman* in all beings despiseth nought.' (*Iśa. Upa.*, 6). But this seeing themselves in all and all in themselves does not mean that they are blind to the apparent differences that exist between things, but that the internal eye has been disciplined, cultured and purified by love and wisdom. The change is all within, it is of such wise men and not of babblers in philosophy (*vācā Vedāntins*) or lip-philosophers, as they are called, that Krishna speaks when He says, 'The wise, &c....' The key to the life of such wise men is, *Kriyādwaitam nakartavyam, Bhāvadwaitam sadā kuru. Adwaita*, the knowledge that what exists is only one thing, is for inner realization and not for outward action, for, the moment action commences, the actor enters the phenomenal plane. The motto means—act not your *adwaita* in conduct but have it always in mind. The *gnāni* should act in life just as other men do, but all the while he should himself never forget that even his action is real only on the phenomenal plane. His narrow personality is a thing of the past, and he has become impersonal even in life—God himself; and that it is why it is said, killing he kills not; 'He who is free from egotism and attachment—even though he should destroy the world, kills not nor is bound thereby' (*Gītā*, XVIII, 17, see also V, 8,9). That is why it is said that the *gnāni* does not really do *karma*. (*Gītā*, III, 17). The actions which he does are not really done by him, but by the *gunas* of the *prakṛiti*, which work even after his individuality ceases, by the impetus of his past *karma*, just as a wheel continues to roll even after the force that set it in motion ceases. It is only the ignorant man who is blinded by his *ahankāra* or egoism that thinks that the actions really done by the *gunas* of *prakṛiti* (nature) are done by him. (*Gītā*, III, 27.)

Unless and until the grand truth we have been trying to express, be fully grasped, Krishna's words in the 2nd Chapter under reference cannot be understood. It is too much to expect such a clear grasp of this truth from unsympathetic and ill-informed foreigners like Bishop Caldwell. Learning is not philosophy, and more than linguistic attainments are required to interpret works like the Bible and the *Gītā*. The hypothesis on which the learned Bishop bases his tirade is, as we said, fatally vicious.

"Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will
Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand
And governed appetites; and piety,
And love of lonely study; humbleness,
Uprightness, heed to injure naught which lives,
Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
Which lightly letteth go what others prize;
And equanimity, and charity
Which spieth no man's faults; and tenderness
Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
Fluttered by no desires; a bearing mild,
Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly mixed.
With patience, fortitude, and purity;
An unvengeful spirit, never given
To rate itself too high;—such be the signs,
O, Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set
On that fair path which leads to heavenly birth!"
(*Gītā*, XVI, 1-3).

If the above be the qualities of the man who has but set his feet on the path, what should be those of him who

has attained the goal? A *gnāni* is nothing but a personification of *karuna* (mercy), *maitri* (love), *mudita* (blissfulness), and *upeksha* (the higher carelessness).

Rare, very rare, indeed, would be the circumstances which would compel such a *gnāni* to commit the crime of murder, and supposing that he does commit it, which would never be unless for the benefit of humanity, he would never plead the defence which Mr. Caldwell imagines him to do. He would know that the murder, the court, and its punishment whatever it be, are unreal. He would not care to plead for his own sake, nor would he grudge to undergo the penalty for the crime. All the while, however,—and here is the difference between the wise man and others,—he would know within himself that he being the *Ātman*, never committed a crime nor suffered the punishment. Krishna never meant his words to be employed in the way Mr. Caldwell uses them, which is as absurd as a man committing adultery and, when arraigned, preaching to the Court, the solemn precept of Jesus, 'Resist not evil.' It is a pity that the Bishop failed to notice what Krishna himself said—'The wise never grieve either for the living or for the dead; what He said, was said purely to hold forth to Arjuna the example of wise men, and He could never have dreamt such an abuse of His sublime philosophy as the Bishop indulges in. The truths which he revealed to Arjuna were meant to be realized and acted upon. And he who so realises and acts will never attempt to set them up in defence of any crime which, under extraordinary circumstances, he might be compelled to commit.

When properly understood, Krishna's advice to Arjuna under reference is as follows—O Arjuna, remember that life and death are illusory, that the *Ātman* or God alone really exists, that It is ancient, immovable, neither slays nor is slain. If you fight your battle with your mind fixed upon the *Ātman*, the one Reality, you will have no cause to grieve, for you will not be deceived by the illusion of life and death; and secondly, even fighting, you will not really fight, for actions belong not to the *Ātman*, but are the result of *karma* and *prakṛiti*.

(To be continued).

Extracts.

THE MIND, A MADDENED MONKEY!

Swāmi Vivekānanda says in his book on *Rāja Yoga*:—
"How hard it is to control the mind, well has it been compared to the maddened monkey. There was a monkey, restless by his own nature, as all monkeys are, as if that were not enough, some one made him drink freely of wine, so that he became still more restless. Then a scorpion stung him. When a man is stung by a scorpion, he jumps about for a whole day; so that the poor monkey found his condition worse than ever. To complete his misery, a demon entered into him. What language can describe the uncontrollable restlessness of that monkey? The human mind is like that monkey, incessantly active by its own nature; then it becomes drunk with the wine of desire, thus increasing its turbulence. After desire takes possession, comes the sting of the scorpion of jealousy of others whose desires meet with fulfilment; and last of all, the demon of pride takes possession of the mind, making it think itself of all importance. How hard to control such a mind!"

Arouse man to a sense of what he is, and he will soon be what he ought.—Schelling.